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not been recently observed should be so as speedily as possible, and with sufficient frequency to give places of indisputable accuracy.

"In the mean time the recently published Greenwich twelve years' catalogue will still further assist our inquiries; and I hope, at no distant time, to be able to offer to the Society the result of the comparison of all the stars common to it and the *Fundamenta* which are not already included in the present memoir."

Extract of a Letter from Mr. J. Curley, of Georgetown College, Washington.

"On the 28th November last, the Rev. T. M. Jenkins, a member of this College (to whose liberality we are indebted for our observatory), when on his passage to Rio Janeiro, saw a comet, of which the following is a description.

"On the 28th of November, at $7^h\frac{1}{4}$ p.m." (being then in about 10° S. latitude, and 30° W. longitude), "we saw a comet to the westward, nearly in the track of the sun, about 14° above the horizon, as measured with the quadrant. The nucleus very distinct, about as large in appearance as *Mars*, the tail curved and pointing towards the south (SW.), quite bright and nearly a degree in length as seen by the naked eye, but much larger when viewed with the glass. It was seen by all the crew for about twenty minutes, when a cloud obscured it and it was seen no more."

Mr. Curley suggests the probable identity of this comet with the great comet of 1556, to which Mr. Hind has drawn attention. Mr. Hind remarks on Mr. Curley's letter,—"I think it is *quite possible* that the comet seen by the Rev. T. Jenkins on November 28, 1849, may have been the great one expected about that time. My own opinion, however, though I must admit the possibility of the identity, is, that the object observed was not the expected comet. If we are to understand by 'the track of the sun,' the *same parallel of declination*, the right ascension of the comet would have been about $18^h\,30^m$, giving the time of perihelion passage, with my elements, about Nov. 13, 1849, but on this supposition the comet's declination would be rather less than that of the sun, which seems to be contradicted by the direction of the tail. Again, if we suppose the two comets identical, and perihelion passage November 13, it is not very easy to account for its not having been observed after the 28th of that month, since it would be receding from the sun's place, though at the same time going away from us.

"I do not think it is practicable to observe the comet now, if it were in perihelion between November 10 and 20, 1849. I find, if we fix the perihelion passage on November 10, the comet's position, April 1, will be about,

Right Ascension, $2^h\,21^m\!\cdot\!3$. North Polar Distance, 92° 39′.

Distance from earth, 3·40

" sun, 2·56

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" And if we suppose perihelion passage November 20, we have for April 1,—

Right Ascension, $2^h\ 14^m{\cdot}9$. North Polar Distance, 92° 26′.
Distance from earth, 3·27
,, sun, 2·42

" The comet must, therefore, be situate in strong twilight; but, perhaps Mr. Lassell, Mr. Hartnup, or Professor Challis, may think it worth while to look at the neighbourhood. I am prevented here by trees."

On the Expected Comet of 1264 and 1556. By Mr. Hind.*

" Mr. Barber, who was recently elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, and who undertook to continue the calculation of the perturbations of the comet of 1556, which I had commenced in 1848, has just sent me a notification of one of his results, which appears to show that the comet may not be due for some time to come; at any rate, it renders a close and systematic research very desirable. Mr. Barber finds that the effect of the attraction of *Jupiter*, *Saturn*, and *Uranus*, from 1556 to 1592, and of *Jupiter* alone to 1806 (including the aphelion portion of the orbit), will *retard* the comet no less than 750 days; and there can, I think, be very little doubt that *Saturn* and *Uranus* will delay it still longer.

" Mr. Barber is computing the disturbances produced by *Saturn* up to 1806, but has not yet completed them. The 750 days added to the time of arrival at perihelion, supposing T unaltered, brings us up to April; but even this must be too early, if the major-axis in 1556 corresponded to the periodic time from 1264 to 1556; and I think there is as much reason to suppose it longer as shorter than the value thus found.

" My object in writing to you is to apprise you of Mr. Barber's results, in case you think there are other observers, with telescopes of sufficient power, who would be willing to look out for the comet. I find it is most convenient to project the calculated places on a chart: it is then easy to see in what *line* the comet should be sought, on any particular date, according to different hypotheses respecting the time of arrival at perihelion.

" I think what is most wanted is an ephemeris for distances of (say) 140 or 150 days from perihelion passage, for at this time of the year the part of the heavens where the comet is to be sought will be near opposition.

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* As the *Notice* is going to press, Mr. Hind informs me that he has reason to believe the return of this comet may be delayed by perturbation *for some years*. I have therefore suppressed the *sweeping* ephemerides which he had computed on the supposition that the perihelion passage of the planet might be expected next autumn. A further account of this comet may be expected from Mr. Hind very shortly.—*Ed. M. N.*

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